

Shibuya lifts Kernels to 6th straight

Written by Morgan Hawk

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PEORIA, Ill. -- Tim Shibuya led the Kernels to their sixth straight victory with a 2-1 win over the Peoria Chiefs at Dozer Park on Monday night.

Shibuya (2-0) pitched into the ninth inning for the win, allowing only one run on five hits. The Chiefs have now scored only one run in each of the first three games of the series.

Shibuya worked quickly and was efficient the entire evening as he threw only 76 pitches (53 strikes). It was the second start of the season for the right-hander after making a total of six relief appearances. Shibuya did not allow a walk while striking out two.

Shibuya entered the ninth inning with a 2-0 advantage, but he allowed a leadoff bunt single to Charlie Tilson and an RBI double to Jordan Walton, cutting the Kernels' lead to 2-1. Shibuya then handed the ball to relief pitcher Madison Boer.

Boer induced a groundout by Jeremy Schaffer that moved Walton, the tying run, to third with one out. The Kernels brought the infield in and Bruce Caldwell popped up to shortstop Niko Goodrum in foul territory. Breyvic Valera then bounced to second base and ended the game. Boer picked up his sixth save of the season.

The Kernels (78-46) scored runs in their first two at-bats to take the early 2-0 advantage. Jonathan Murphy led off the top of the first inning by reaching on an error by Chiefs second baseman Bruce Caldwell. Murphy later scored on a sacrifice fly to center field by Mike Gonzales.

In the second inning, Joel Licon started the frame by drawing a base on balls. He later scored on an RBI single by Jeremias Pineda, putting the Kernels up by a pair. Licon did not record a hit

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in the game and saw his 16-game hitting streak come to an end.

Ben O'Shea (1-4) took the loss for Peoria, allowing two runs (one earned) on three hits over six innings. He struck out four and walked three. Jay Voss went two scoreless innings in relief. Dixon Llorens added one scoreless inning for the Chiefs.

The Kernels will face the Chiefs (65-58) in Peoria again Tuesday night at 6:30 with Tim Atherton (6-4, 2.58) on the mound for Cedar Rapids.

KERNELS (2): Murphy, cf, 4 1 0 0, Goodrum, ss, 3 0 1 0, Gonzales, 1b, 3 0 1 1, Walker, rf, 4 0 0 0, Harrison, dh, 3 0 0 0, Licon, 3b, 3 1 0 0, Grimes, 2b, 4 0 1 0, Quesada, c, 3 0 0 0, Pineda, lf, 3 0 1 1. Totals 30 2 4 2.

PEORIA (1): McElroy, rf, 3 0 0 0, Tilson, cf, 4 1 1 0, Walton, 1b, 4 0 1 1, Schaffer, dh, 4 0 0 0, Caldwell, 2b, 4 0 0 0, Valera, lf, 4 0 0 0, Vargas, 3b, 3 0 1 0, Herrera, ss, 3 0 0 0, Velazco, c, 3 0 2 0. Totals 32 1 5 1.

Kernels 110 000 000 - 2 4 1

Peoria 000 000 001 - 1 5 1

Shibuya, Boer (9) and Quesada. O'Shea, Voss (7), Llorens (9) and Velazco. W - Shibuya (2-0). L - O'Shea (1-4). S - Boer (6). 2B - Gonzales (4), Walton (23). SB - Goodrum 2 (20). E - Goodrum (25), Caldwell (2). T - 2:08. A - 1,177.